

R 250915Z MAR 93
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3676
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY BEIJING
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION USVIENNA
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
CHJUSMAG SEOUL KS
COMUSKOREA SEOUL KS//CJ-CC/BJ-CM-H/SJS/EJ-J/PAJ//
SA CINCUNC KS
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//FPA//
JOINTSTAFF WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCUNC SEOUL KS//UNCMAC//

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 02885

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PREL KNNP PARM KS KN
SUBJECT: DPRK ANNOUNCES END OF "SEMI-WAR" STATE

REF: (A) FBIS SK2403053393, (B) FBIS OW2403125093

¶1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.

¶2. ON MARCH 24, DPRK SUPREME COMMANDER KIM JONG IL ISSUED AN ORDER LIFTING THE "SEMI-WAR STATE" (REF A) THAT HAD BEEN INSTITUTED MARCH 9 IN RESPONSE TO THE BEGINNING OF TEAM SPIRIT. ACCORDING TO THE MOFA INTER-KOREA POLICY DIVISION, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THE DPRK HAS OFFICIALLY ANNOUNCED SUCH A STEP AFTER THE CONCLUSION OF A TEAM SPIRIT EXERCISE. (COMMENT: WE NOTE THAT IT IS THE FTX PORTION OF TEAM SPIRIT '93 WHICH HAS CONCLUDED. END COMMENT.) MOFA ANALYSTS BELIEVE THAT IN TAKING THIS ACTION THE NORTH HAS LINKED ITS "SEMI-WAR STATE" SPECIFICALLY TO TEAM SPIRIT, SEPARATING IT CLEARLY FROM THE NORTH'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE NPT. WHETHER INTENDED OR NOT, KIM JONG IL'S ORDER IS ALSO VIEWED BY SOUTH KOREANS AS A SIGNAL THAT THE DPRK MAY BE INTERESTED IN IMPROVING THE CLIMATE FOR RESOLVING THE IAEA IMPASSE. IN ADDITION, MOFA ANALYSTS SUGGEST THAT THE DPRK NEEDS TO GET ITS WORKERS BACK ON THE JOB, AND BY ISSUING A PUBLIC ORDER THIS GOAL IS QUICKLY ACCOMPLISHED.

¶3. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN REPORTS (REF B) THAT VISA ISSUANCE WILL QUICKLY RETURN TO NORMAL. JIM GROEN OF THE WORLDWIDE LEADERSHIP COUNCIL TOLD POLOFF MARCH 23 THAT HE WILL ESCORT A U.S. CHRISTIAN MUSICAL GROUP TO THE DPRK FOR A 12 DAY SERIES OF CONCERTS AND PROGRAMS BEGINNING APRIL ¶16. GROEN SAID THE DPRK MISSION IN NEW YORK HAD ASSURED HIM THAT THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM GETTING THEIR VISAS. GROEN ADDED THAT PARENTS OF THE GROUP MEMBERS HAVE BEEN PARTICULARLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE "SEMI-WAR STATE" ANNOUNCED BY THE NORTH. THE DPRK MISSION INDICATED TO GROEN THAT THE SECURITY SITUATION WOULD CAUSE THEM NO DIFFICULTIES.

¶4. THE ROK NATIONAL UNIFICATION BOARD TOLD US THAT THE SOUTH HAS REQUESTED A MEETING OF LIAISON OFFICERS AT PANMUNJOM THE MORNING OF MARCH 26 TO PASS AN INVITATION LETTER FROM THE HEAD OF THE SOUTH KOREAN CHONDO CHURCH (CHONDOISM IS A NATIVE RELIGION WITH A MODEST FOLLOWING IN KOREA) TO HIS COUNTERPART IN THE NORTH. THE LETTER INVITES THE HEAD OF THE NORTH KOREAN CHONDO CHURCH TO ATTEND A CHONDO CONFERENCE IN THE SOUTH. NUB OFFICIALS REPORTED LATE MARCH 25 THAT THE DPRK HAS NOT AGREED TO ACCEPT THE LETTER, SAYING THAT SUCH INVITATIONS DO NOT IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE OF N/S DIALOGUE AT THIS TIME. THIS REQUEST FOR A MEETING IS THE FIRST INTER-KOREAN LIAISON OFFICE CONTACT SINCE THE RETURN OF LI IN MO ON MARCH 19.

¶5. COMMENT: WITH THE CONCLUSION OF THE FTX PORTION OF THE EXERCISE, THE DPRK HAS TONED DOWN ITS PUBLIC POSTURING ON TEAM SPIRIT. KIM JONG IL HAS DECLARED VICTORY TO HIS DOMESTIC AUDIENCE AND SAID IN EFFECT THAT NORTH KOREANS CAN GET BACK TO WORK. DESPITE ROKG EFFORTS TO FOSTER

PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE CONTACTS INDEPENDENT OF OTHER FACTORS IN
THE N/S EQUATION, THE NORTH IS NOT YET WILLING TO MOVE
FORWARD IN THIS AREA.

BURGHARDT